



characteristic:

a quality or feature typical of something or someone that is easy to recognize

Mars Rover Model Celebration – Lesson Plan

Introduction:

One of the new vocabulary words for this unit is “characteristic”. Characteristic means “a quality or feature typical of something or someone that is easy to recognize”. Some things have characteristic smells. Think about when you walk into your home around dinnertime. Often, you know what your mother is cooking for dinner before you see the food because of its characteristic aroma. If you’ve ever smelled skunk spray you also know that a skunk has very characteristic smell.

Certain traits are characteristic of people as well. Being tall is characteristic of basketball players. A characteristic of engineers is that they enjoy using math and computers. Places can also have things that are characteristic. Palm trees are characteristic of warm places while snow is characteristic of very cold places.

Example:

Let’s look at two pictures that will better help us to understand the word characteristic. The first picture shows a duck. One characteristic of a duck is its webbed feet, which helps this bird swim better. The second picture shows a mouse. Webbed feet are NOT characteristic of mice. The mouse shown in the picture looks funny to us because his feet are wrong—they are not characteristic. Mice need feet with claws that help them to dig in hard soil.

Reflection:

I am going to name some things and a feature. If the feature I name is characteristic of the thing, I want you to put your thumb up and say CHARACTERISTIC. If the feature is not characteristic, I want you to put your thumbs down and remain silent.

- Cars and wings (thumbs down)
- Potato chips and salt (thumbs up)
- A king or queen and a crown (thumbs up)
- A school and a chalkboard (thumbs up)

Make it personal:

Think about your favorite animal. What is very characteristic about this animal? What is a feature of this animal that makes it easy to recognize? Tell your neighbor about your choice. Start your sentence with, “My favorite animal is a ____ and a characteristic of this animal is _____” I will ask some of you to share your ideas with the class.